Met Office

NEWS

Amber weather warning issued as unsettled weather set to welcome in New Year

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A combination of heavy rain, strong winds and some snow all feature in the UK forecast for the New Year period.

A series of National Severe Weather Warnings – including an Amber Warning for rain in Scotland – are currently in place.

Met Office Chief Meteorologist, Steve Willington, explained: "A series of low-pressure systems will track across the UK over the next couple of days bringing some potentially disruptive weather.

"Almost the entire UK is covered by at least one weather warning during the coming week, demonstrating that it is a complicated weather forecast at the moment. Although we know today and tomorrow will see heavy rain and strong winds in parts of Scotland, Northern Ireland and northern England, plus some snow in parts of Scotland, it's Wednesday's weather where there is less confidence."

Today, heavy rain continues in parts of Scotland, with snow possible in some parts of northern Scotland and a Yellow Warning for rain and snow in place. Strong winds will be a feature across the Pennines, where gusts of up to 50-60 mph are possible over higher ground. A Yellow Warning for wind is in place. It will be drier and cloudier, feeling mild in the south.

New Year's Eve (Tuesday) sees a number of warnings for wind, snow and rain across the country, with an Amber Warning for rain in parts of Scotland.

Steve Willington said: "Heavy rain will develop through Monday night and Tuesday morning and is likely to cause some property flooding and travel disruption in the Amber warning area. People in Scotland should check their flood risk on the SEPA website.

"Heavy rain is expected across the whole of Scotland on Tuesday, and a separate band of rain will also push across Northern Ireland, England and Wales by the evening. Strong winds will also be a feature across Northern Ireland, southern Scotland and northeast England, which may lead to some travel disruption on New Year's Eve."

Aurora sightings possible on New Year's Eve

A coronal mass ejection (CME) which left the Sun early on 29 December, is expected to arrive on New Year's Eve. But, although the Northern Lights may be in place, visibility could hamper any sightings. Tomorrow night is expected to be cloudy across much of the UK, though there could be some clear spells in the east of Scotland, northeast England and Northern Ireland from around 18:00 to 21:00. These will likely be transient though with cloud and rain around for many, especially in Northern and Western Scotland.

Uncertainty from New Year's Day

Attention shifts further south on Wednesday, with impacts possible from wind, snow and rain. Met Office Deputy Chief Meteorologist Rebekah Hicks said: "Wednesday's depression looks increasingly likely to be a flat feature, with rain the main hazard. A band of persistent and at times heavy rain will linger across Wales and northwest England through Tuesday night and Wednesday morning, before clearing southeast during Wednesday afternoon. This rain will be accompanied by strong, gusty winds.

"There is still some uncertainty in the forecast at present, and with such varied and potentially fast-moving weather conditions, it is important for people to keep up to date with the very latest details.

"The forecast uncertainty comes from the positioning of the jet stream – a ribbon of air high up in the atmosphere which is often the driving force behind our weather – and how it interacts with a pulse of warm air emerging from the Azores region on Tuesday. This interaction will have a significant impact on the development of the depression we expect to see on Wednesday but until that happens, some uncertainty in the forecast will remain. What we do expect though, is for heavy and persistent rain to be the main area of concern. Warnings may evolve over the coming days as confidence increases."

Turning cold from Thursday

By Thursday, it is likely that the whole of the UK will experience a change to colder conditions, with this persisting into the weekend. Wintry showers are expected to affect the far north and east at times, but away from these, sunshine will be much more widespread than in recent days. Overnight temperatures will widely fall below freezing, perhaps reaching minus double digits in areas of Scotland already covered in snow.

Snow and ice are likely to lead to some travel disruption and difficult driving conditions on New Year's Day and overnight until 2 January in parts of northern Scotland, and a Yellow Warning has been issued.

You can find the latest forecast on our website, on YouTube, by following us on X and Facebook, as well as on our mobile app which is available for iPhone from the App store and for Android from the Google Play store.

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